

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-10 OMB-01
TRSE-00 AID-05 EB-07 IGA-02 MC-02 /078 R

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TO AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE
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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR,ENRG, MILI, RP, VN

SUBJEC-: ALLEGED U.S. SUPPORT FOR PHILIPPINE MILITARY
BUILDUP IN SPRATLY ISLANDS

1. WASHINGTON POST JUNE 10 CARRIED ARTICLE BY BERNARD
WIDEMAN DATELINED PUERTO PRINCESA WHICH STATES PHILIPPINES
AND VIETNAM BECOMING INVOLVED IN DANGEROUS CONFRONTATION IN
SPRATLY ISLANDS. ARTICLE REVIEWS STATUS AND ACTIVITIES OF
WESTCOM, PARTICULARLY DOLS 150 MILLION BUILDING PROGRAM
INCLUDING NEW HEADQUARTERS AND 9,000 FOOT RUNWAY AT PUERTA
PRINCESA AND 5,500 FOOT RUNWAY ON PAGASA ISLAND. STATES
PHILIPPINE EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN CONTROL OVER PARTS OF
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SPRATLYS SPURRED BY DISCOVERY OF OIL WEST OF PALAWAN AND
PREDICTS IMMINENT INCREASE IN WESTCOM STRENGTH TO 5,000.

2. ARTICLE AS RECEIVED BY POST ALLEGED THAT U.S. PLAYING
MAJOR ROLE IN ASSISTING PHILIPPINE BUILDUP OF WESTCOM,
INCLUDING PROVISION OF FIVE OLD AMERICAN FRIGATES FOR
OCEAN CONTROL, PROVISION "IN COMING MONTHS" OF SQUADRON

OF A-4 AIRCRAFT, A SQUADRON OF ALBATROSS PATROL PLANES, AND TWO ADDITIONAL FRIGATES, AS WELL AS A COMPUTERIZED OPERATIONS CENTER FOR WESTCOM HEADQUARTERS. ARTICLE ALSO QUOTED UNIDENTIFIED PHILIPPINE OFFICERS TO EFFECT THAT JUSMAG PERSONNEL "FREQUENTLY VISIT HERE TO HELP PLAN STRATEGY AND OFFER TECHNICAL ADVICE."

3. BEFORE PUBLISHING, POST CONTACTED DOD REGARDING ABOVE ALLEGATIONS AND WAS GIVEN REPLY QUOTED IN PARA 4 BELOW. AS RESULT, PUBLISHED ARTICLE OMITTED MENTION OF A-4 SQUADRON, ADDITIONAL ALBATROSS SQUADRON (ARTICLE DOES MENTION SIX ALBATROSS CURRENTLY IN INVENTORY), ADDITIONAL FRIGATES AND COMPUTERIZED OPERATIONS CENTER. IN ADDITION, PUBLISHED ARTICLE QUOTED EXTENSIVELY FROM DOD GUIDANCE WITH REGARD TO JUSMAG PERSONNEL AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

4. VERBATIM DOD GUIDANCE WAS AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE JUSMAG PERSONNEL HAVE NOT PLAYED AN ADVISORY ROLE TO WESTCOM OR ANY OTHER PHILIPPINE COMMAND IN RECENT YEARS, NOR ASSISTED IN PLANNING STRATEGY FOR PHILIPPINE PRESENCE IN SPRATLYS. THEY DO PROVIDE ADVICE ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE MATTERS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES.

QUOTE WITH REGARD TO SPECIFIC ITEMS REPORTEDLY BEING PROVIDED BY THE U.S. FOR USE IN WESTCOM:

QUOTE -- THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS NOT INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPUTERIZED OPERATIONS CENTER.

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QUOTE -- THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT PROVIDED A-4S TO THE PHILIPPINES.

QUOTE -- THE UNITED STATES HAS PROVIDED A LARGE NUMBER OF EXCESS NAVAL CRAFT TO THE PHILIPPINES IN RECENT YEARS FOR THEIR GENERAL USE CONSISTENT WITH U.S. LEGISLATION. THESE ARRANGEMENTS WERE MADE BEFORE WESTCOM WAS ESTABLISHED.

QUOTE -- THE U.S. PROVIDED FOR GENERAL PHILIPPINE USE 4 ALBATROSS PATROL PLANES (HU-16) TO THE PHILIPPINES UNDER MAP PRIOR TO 1964 AND 2 MORE IN 1975.

QUOTE UNDER THE TERMS OF THE 1947 MILITARY ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT WITH THE PHILIPPINES REVISED IN 1953 THE UNITED STATES MAINTAINS A JOINT U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE GROUP (JUSMAG) IN THAT COUNTRY. THE FY '77 GRANT MAP PROGRAM TO THE PHILIPPINES TOTALS DOLS 17 MILLION. FMS FINANCING IS DOLS 20 MILLION AND CASH SALES ARE EXPECTED

TO BE ABOUT DOLS 70 MILLION. THE PHILIPPINES ALSO RECEIVES MILITARY EXCESS ITEMS FROM US. THESE TRANSFERS TO THE PHILIPPINES ARE USED BY THEM TO ASSIST IN THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT OF A SELF-RELIANT SECURITY POSTURE. THEY ARE NOT INTENDED FOR USE IN ANY PARTICULAR BUILDUP AND THE U.S. HAS NOT PROVIDED ATTITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO THE PHILIPPINES BASED ON REQUIREMENTS FOR USE IN OR AROUND THE SPRATLY ISLANDS.

QUOTE IN FULFILLING REQUIREMENTS OF U.S. LEGISLATION, JUSMAG PERSONNEL PERIODICALLY VISIT THE VARIOUS PHILIPPINE MILITARY COMMANDS INCLUDING WESTCOM WHERE U.S. MATERIEL IS IN USE. END QUOTE.

5. ARTICLE CLOSED WITH FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS REGARDING OIL EXPLORATION: QUOTE MEANWHILE, AMOCO HAS ALSO BEGUN DRILLING FOR THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT ABOUT 150 MILES WEST OF HERE. ACCORDING TO U.S. SOURCES IN MANILA, AMOCO UNCLASSIFIED

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WAS WARNED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT THAT THE AREA WAS CONTESTED BY OTHER NATIONS AND THAT IN CASE OF DIFFICULTIES NO HELP COULD BE EXPECTED FROM THE U.S. MILITARY.

QUOTE PHILIPPINE MARINES, HOWEVER, ARE STATIONED ON BOARD THE DRILL SHIPS, AND FRIGATES ARE ANCHORED NEARBY.

QUOTE INFORMED SOURCES SAY THAT PRESIDENT FERDINAND MARCOS WILL SOON ANNOUNCE THE WESTWARD EXTENSION OF THE COUNTRY'S AIR DEFENSE ZONE TO INCLUDE THE AREA WHERE THE AMOCO SHIP IS DRILLING.

QUOTE VIETNAM'S AIR DEFENSE ZONE IS BELIEVED TO EXTEND EASTWARD TO WITHIN LESS THAN A HUNDRED MILES FROM THE NEW PHILIPPINE ZONE.

QUOTE OIL IS A KEY ISSUE IN THE PHILIPPINES, SINCE ABOUT A THIRD OF ALL IMPORT PAYMENTS GO FOR ITS PURCHASE AND THE COUNTRY IS ALMOST COMPLETELY DEPENDENT ON IMPORTED OIL. END QUOTE.

5. DEPARTMENT HAS PREPARED FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE FOR USE IF QUERIED: QUOTE: QUESTION: THERE IS A WASHINGTON POST PRESS REPORT THAT THE PHILIPPINES AND VIETNAM MAY BE MOVING TOWARD CONFRONTATION REGARDING THE SPRATLY ISLANDS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA. WHAT IS THE U.S. VIEW TOWARD OWNERSHIP OF THESE ISLANDS?

QUOTE ANSWER: A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES HAVE CLAIMED OWNERSHIP OF THE SPRATLYS AND THE PARACELS. WE HAVE NO POSITION REGARDING THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THESE ISLANDS.

QUOTE QUESTION: AMERICAN OIL COMPANIES HAVE APPARENTLY
BEGUN DRILLING IN THE DISPUTED AREA. HOW HAVE YOU
ADVISED THEM?

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QUOTE ANSWER: IT IS OUR GENERAL POLICY TO WARN AMERICAN
COMPANIES OF THE POTENTIAL DANGERS OF BECOMING INVOLVED
IN AREAS UNDER DISPUTED OWNERSHIP.

QUOTE QUESTION: DOES THAT MEAN YOU WOULD NOT DEFEND
THEIR INTERESTS?

QUOTE ANSWER: I AM NOT GOING TO SPECULATE ON FUTURE
DEVELOPMENTS IN AREAS WHERE JURISDICTION IS NOT SETTLED.

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 10-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Release Date: n/a
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